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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 002839

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, DRL

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TAGS: PHUM KDEM PREL PGOV YM KICC HUMAN RIGHTS DEMOCRATIC REFORM

SUBJECT: FURTHER DETAILS ON YEMEN-EU DEMOCRACY/HUMAN RIGHTS
CONFERENCE

REF: A. MISENHEIMER 12/03 E-MAIL

1B. SANAA 2754

Classified By: Ambassador Edmund J. Hull for Reasons 1.5 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary: DCM and Pol/Econ Deputy received updated information on the Sana'a Inter-Governmental Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the role of the International Criminal Court to be held in January (reftels) from No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) representative Niccolo Figa-Talamanca 12/3. Figa-Talamanca noted changes in the agenda, including creating a new working group session on the role of civil society in democracy and human rights. Confirmed government participants include the Jordanian Foreign Minister, the German Deputy Foreign Minister and the French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, while prominent non-government participants include Saad Eddin Ibrahim. Organizers expect the foreign minister and/or the justice minister to attend from Arab countries. The ICC working group panel is well-developed, while the organizers continue to welcome assistance and advice on the composition and design of the other two working groups. Post will continue to track conference preparations. End Summary.

Agenda Structure

12. (U) Figa-Talamanca said the agenda was refined further to reflect concerns raised by Post and others. In addition to plenary sessions, the three sub-conferences/working groups are now divided into a) the democracy and rule of law, b) the role of civil society in promoting democracy and human rights; and c) the International Criminal Court (ICC). The democracy and rule of law and the ICC sessions would have primarily government participants while the civil society session would involve primarily NGO and media participants. Figa-Talamanca said this adjustment was partly in response to Post's concerns about the ICC panel, in that the organizers believe limiting non-government participation to only the highest levels in the ICC panel would limit potential anti-U.S. rhetoric. He said that each working group would begin with five to seven minute speeches from specific highest-level participants and follow with open discussion in which speakers register during the first session to speak.

13. (U) Figa-Talamanca said the non-ICC portions of the agenda were less well-developed in terms of participants and focus because he was waiting for the National Democratic Institute (NDI) Yemen Country Director to return 12/9 and for an UNDP representative to arrive 12/10 to consult further. He also reiterated an invitation for Embassy Sanaa representatives to join those discussions and help shape the sessions.

Invited and Confirmed Speakers

14. (U) Figa-Talamanca said several prominent government and non-government officials have confirmed their attendance, including the Jordanian Foreign Minister, the German Deputy Foreign Minister, the French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the Italian Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, international law expert George Abisaab and activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim. He said the Dutch were considering sending either the Minister for Development and International Cooperation or the head of parliament's foreign affairs committee. DCM asked about Arab countries participation, and Figa-Talamanca said they received assurances that at least one of the two government ministers invited (Foreign Minister and Justice Minister) would attend from most Arab countries. The organizers have not yet received confirmations from Iraq or Afghanistan yet, but he said they "really hope they come."

International Criminal Court (ICC) Working Group

15. (U) DCM again noted USG concerns over the ICC portion of the conference and asked for more details. Figa-Talamanca said he expected the Jordanian Foreign Minister to address the plenary in Jordan's capacity in the presidency of the ICC

Assembly of States Parties, with the Prosecutor of the ICC Luis Moreno Ocampo speaking at the working group. He said "it is possible to discuss ICC without being anti-American," noting that in two recent conferences where the ICC was the primary focus -- a technical-level governmental one with 105 countries in 2002 and a combined governmental and NGO one held in Rome in 2003 -- the American position was not a focus. He expected either the French or German deputy FMs to also speak at the ICC working group level.

HULL